DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 078 386 CS 000 612

AUTHOR	Foust, Betty Jean
TITLE	Helping Your Child to Read.
INSTITUTION	North Carolina State Library, Raleigh.
PUB DATE	73
NOTE	21p.
EDRS PRICE	MF-$0.65 HC-$3.29
DESCRIPTORS	*Beginning Reading; Children; *Elementary Education; Parent Child Relationship; *Parent Participation; *Prereading Experience; Preschool Learning; Reading Comprehension; Reading Games; Reading Improvement; *Reading Materials; Student Motivation

ABSTRACT

This booklet provides suggestions for parents in helping their children to learn how to read. The first section provides 34 suggestions and activities for parents to use with preschool children, such as reciting nursery rhymes, reading aloud, respecting the child's mood, and playing listening games. The second section offers 25 suggestions and activities for the parent to use after his child begins school. These include field trips, good sleeping habits, praise of the child, and patience with the child. The third section provides 18 suggestions and activities for independent reading--usually reached at the third or fourth grade levels. These include orally reading to the child, giving him a choice of places from which he may borrow books, and encouraging the use of reference materials. A list of addresses from which free reading materials for children are available is also provided. (DI)

ED 078386

U S DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH
EDUCATION & WELFARE
NATIONAL INSTITUTE OF
EDUCATION
THIS DOCUMENT HAS BEEN REPRODUCED EXACTLY AS RECEIVED FROM THE PERSON OR ORGANIZATION ORIGINATING IT. POINTS OF VIEW OR OPINIONS STATED DO NOT NECESSARILY REPRESENT OFFICIAL NATIONAL INSTITUTE OF EDUCATION POSITION OR POLICY

Helping Your Child to Read

Office of State Library
North Carolina Department of Art, Culture and History
Raleigh

FILMED FROM BEST AVAILABLE COPY

This booklet has been prepared as a part of a proposed dissertation at Duke University, Durham, North Carolina, and in cooperation with the North Carolina Office of State Library. The writer acknowledges the assistance of Dr. Allan S. Hurlburt, Dr. Anne H. Adams, Dr. Lucy Davis, and Dr. Olan L. Petty.

Betty Jean Foust—Writer
Bill Ballard—Graphic Artist

Funds for printing this booklet were provided through the Library Services and Construction Act.

Helping Your Child to Read

Office of State Library
North Carolina Department of Art, Culture and History
Raleigh, North Carolina 27611
1973

STATE OF NORTH CAROLINA
Department of Art, Culture and History
Raleigh 27611

Grace J. Rohrer
Secretary

Office of State Library
Philip S. Ogilvie, Administrator

Dear Parents:

Today, more than ever before, the process of learning to read is regarded as the business of parents, as well as teachers, children and librarians. This great interest in reading is not surprising, since reading is the key to your child's success in school. Part of a parent's responsibility is to assist the teacher in helping young people learn to read and learn to enjoy reading.

You are your child's first teacher. By the time he is six years old he has made an all-important start on his education. You have taught him much of what he knows and you, as his parent, should continue to help him explore and learn. The responsibility of helping your child does not end when he begins school.

This booklet has been prepared to give you some ideas on how you can help your child read. There are ideas for helping him before he enters school, and suggestions for helping him after he learns to read simple materials. All the ideas are easy and take no special skill. Parents can help their child read and succeed.

Sincerely yours,

Philip S. Ogilvie

Administrator

Contents

Page

Before Your Child Begins School
Suggestions and Activities for Pre-Schoolers 5

After Your Child Begins School
Suggestions and Activities for the Beginning Reader 12

Independent Readers
Suggestions and Activities for the Independent Reader 17

Before Your Child Begins School

Parents are teachers. They provide the foundation blocks on which many reading skills are built. Before your child enters school, you as his parents can use simple home activities to help prepare him for reading. How well your child succeeds in beginning reading can be influenced by what you do before he starts school. You are his first teacher.

Suggestions and Activities for Pre-Schoolers

1 Recite nursery rhymes to your child by the time he is eight or nine months old. Old favorites such as "This little pig went to market" or "Pat a cake, pat a cake" can make the child "coo" with pleasure. If you have forgotten these rhymes, get a Mother Goose book to refresh your memory.

2 Initiate reading to your child early in life. Child psychologists agree that a regular time (just before nap time or just before bedtime have become favorite spots in the child's day for many parents and children) for reading aloud is best, since the child will begin to anticipate his reading period just as he looks forward to mealtime. By the time your child is one or two years old, it is usually recommended that he sit where he can see the pictures and turn the pages. Be sure to pause at times for him to enjoy the pictures or supply the next word in a familiar story.

3 Respect your child's mood. The parent may not always be lucky in bringing the book and child together. If the young listener is restless and bored, let reading wait until he wants to listen.

4 Play the game "What does it say?". Printed words are everywhere, thus the pre-schooler becomes aware of the printed words. Cereal boxes, road signs, loaves of bread, jars of jelly—all of these and many more will provide the child with examples, thereby making it easy for him to associate words and pictures.

5 Use the letter S on a salt shaker as one way for your child to learn the letter S. This could be followed by asking your child to find the letter S in newspapers, magazines, billboards, and the like. In a similar way, try other letters which come into the child's daily experience.

6 Let your child plant a few seeds in a pot or out-of-doors (radish and lettuce seeds are good choices) since this activity will provide suspense as well as opportunities for preparing the soil and responsibility for keeping the plants watered.

7 Make local visits to places such as the post office, dairy, museum, airport, hatchery, and the supermarket. Take a little extra time in order that your child can "see behind the scenes." Your child will need plenty of time to take in the *sights*, *sounds*, and *smells*. Ample opportunities should be afforded for discussion and questions during such visits as well as back at home.

8 Take your child to see the surrounding environment. A trip to a farm—to see the cows, pigs, chickens, and a real barn. A walk in the woods can be exciting any time during the year, with many opportunities in any season for observing, exploring, and conversing—perhaps opportunities for singing, dancing, and drawing about items of interest. Trees, plants, flowers, animals, colors—children can identify and readily learn all of these, thereby providing an enriched background through which reading is more easily taught.

9 Take time to become acquainted with television programs appropriate for your child, such as *Sesame Street*, *The Electric Company*, and *Lassie*. Help him learn to find times and stations in the newspaper. Show interest in programs your child likes by occasionally watching them with him.

Make a scrapbook or booklet with your child. It might be in the form of a snapshot album or a paste-in booklet. For example, if your child enjoys kittens, help him find pictures of kittens and assist him in pasting such pictures to form a booklet. A few stapled pages of paper will suffice as a booklet. If it relates to the child, he will treasure it. (Booklets might be made on numerous topics: farm animals, zoo animals, fruits, vegetables, colors, toys, things mothers do, things fathers do, pets.) **10**

Acquire a pet for your child's entertainment and information. An animal provides much to talk about and read about. Help your child to assume responsibility for caring for the pet. Helping your child make a house or a bed for his pet might also provide valuable experiences for your child. Read with your child a book on caring for pets and/or the feeding suggestions on a can of dog food or a sack of rabbit food. **11**

Take time to talk to your child about whatever new interest or new experiences he may have had. Activities become more valuable to your child each time you talk about them with him. **12**

Play a listening game. Ask your child to close his eyes and describe the sounds he hears inside the house as well as outside. Sounds change with the hours; therefore the game might be played at different times during the day or night. **13**

Play a touch game. Put several items from the kitchen on a table. Ask him which feel rough, smooth, cool, warm, soft, or hard. **14**

Play games in which he will be conscious of the different smells. When appropriate ask these questions: **15**

- What do you smell cooking?
- How does mother's perfume smell?
- What foods smell sweet?

16 Teach your child about sizes. Put the objects you wish to compare before your child and ask such questions as:

- Which is larger, a grapefruit or an apple?
- Which is longer, a spoon or a fork?
- Who is taller, mother or father?
- Which plate is larger?

17 Teach your child about shapes. Find objects about the house which are in the shape of a square, a rectangle, a circle, and a triangle. Help him to recognize the shape and draw it. Come back to such emphases often enough to guarantee understanding in pleasant situations.

18 Secure objects for counting purposes. Count with your child objects such as buttons, beads, bottle caps, and the like. Other counting activities might include:

- Count the apples in the fruit bowl.
- Count the mailboxes on your street or near your house.
- Count the chairs in the den or dining room.
- Count the windows in your house.
- Count the number of plates on the table.

19 Play the game "I went to the store." The child begins by saying, "I went to the store to get some bread." The parent adds one item, "I went to the store to get some bread and milk." Your child may say, "I went to the store to get some bread, milk, and candy." Keep adding one item until your child forgets or is frustrated by the length of the sequence.

20 Play observational games such as "I am thinking of something in this room." Example: It is red. It has four legs. One person can sit on it. What is it?

21 Show your child a picture and ask him to point to and name all objects in the picture. Then take the picture away and ask him to recall all objects in the picture.

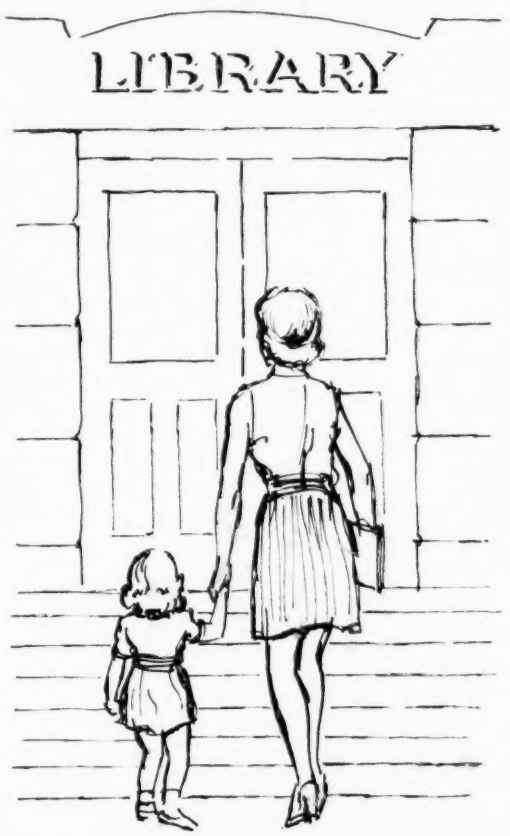
Play the game "Alike and Different." Place on a table items such as a pair of gloves, a bottle cap, a pencil, a hat, a pot, a box, and a purse. Ask your child to choose the items which go together or are alike in some way. (Hopefully in this series your child would choose all the items which a person could wear.) **22**

Say your child's name. Have him find other objects or pictures which begin with the same letter. **23**

Plan visits to a bookstore. Let your child see and touch books. Then let him choose one for purchase. **24**

Help your child cook or prepare a simple food—jello, for instance. Show him the importance of reading the recipe and following its directions. **25**

Begin your child's library by the time he is three or four years old—perhaps earlier. If he has a place to keep his books, he will take more pride in them. He will welcome books for his collection which his parents read as a child. **26**



Plan visits to the public library in your community. By the time your child is four or five years old take him to the children's room at the library. Give him plenty of time for browsing. Help him select one or two books; then help him find a chair and a low table so he may see the pictures and turn the pages easily. Find out if the library has a story hour for children; if there is one, talk it over with your child and plan to go. Also, choose some adult books for yourself, thus setting an example by letting the child see you read these books. **27**

Play "Listen and Name the Beginning Sound." You might say the words—milk, melon, moon, mother. Then your child repeats the words and tries to name the beginning sound—m. **28**

29 Let your child find pictures in magazines which start with the same letter and cut them out. For example—truck, trunk, turtle, tool—all begin with T. Help your child get started by pasting the first picture on a brown paper bag. Print the starting letter on the bag. Encourage him to try other letters the same way.

30 Let your child use a typewriter—a used one for him especially, if this is possible. At first he may just explore the keyboard. Gradually, he will write his name and other words in his vocabulary.

31 Give your child the exact words for something. Instead of referring to "a tree," say "This is a dogwood tree," or say "buttercup" rather than just flower. By answering your child in this manner, you will be extending his vocabulary.

32 Play the game of "look alike." Print letters like this: B D D D T R T T P P H P. Have your child find the letters that look alike. Another day, let your child find the letter that is different.

33 Read with your child the numerals on the speedometer of the car. Play the game "How Fast Are We Traveling?" Soon your child may be able to count by fives and by tens by reading the speedometer. Also, help your child read speed limit signs and numbers on interstate and state highway signs.

34 Place letters of the alphabet and numerals around the house. Magnetic numerals, available at the ten-cent store, may be put on the refrigerator or in your child's room. Make letters of the alphabet with masking tape for the walls or floor. By filling the house with learning aides, your child will become aware that these symbols are important.

Try making modeling dough with your child. Modeling dough is a popular, inexpensive, and creative material for children which requires no cooking. The following recipe is enough for *one* child:

1 cup flour
1/3 cup salt
1/3 cup water (add food coloring for bright colors)

Mix well. If mixture seems too dry, add a little water; if it is too wet, add flour. Some children enjoy using cookie cutters, tongue depressors, and rolling pins with the dough. Modeling dough may be stored in the refrigerator in an airtight jar for 3 to 4 weeks. The child may play with the dough and then return it to the airtight container.

35

After Your Child Begins School

Entering the first grade is a big step for any child. Parents can be of help by talking with their child and helping him understand that he will not learn to read the first day of school or even during the first week. (Some children of course learn to read before entering school.) At this time in a child's life he needs encouragement and approval at home.

Parents may use the following general rules to help their child build confidence and independence as he begins school:

- Let your child know you are interested in his school activities.
- Continue to use field trips as a widening experience for your child.
- Establish good sleeping habits to assure plenty of sleep and rest.
- Praise your child; he needs encouragement.
- Be patient with your child.
- Accept your child as he is and do not compare him with other children.
- Help him to become acquainted with other children in his play.

Parents, as well as teachers, must demonstrate that reading is fun. Parents should continue to have a regular read-aloud time each day. Though your child's reading interests change often, it is the parent's responsibility to help him explore everything about which he is curious.

After your child begins school, many pre-school activities should be continued throughout these formative years. Activities such as trips to the public library, the museum, the supermarket, the woods, and similar places are likely to have value over a period of many years.

Suggestions and Activities for the Beginning Reader

1 Play vocabulary building games if he enjoys them. For example, try to think of big words which are made of two little words—buttercup, bluebird, moonlight, and the like. Soon he will begin to notice the likenesses or differences in the words he finds in print.

2 Make new words from basic words such as "work" (worker, working); "big" (bigger, biggest); "think" (thinking, thinker). The parent may print these words for his child.

3 Try to answer your child's questions. When he asks, "Where does the wind come from?", he is responding to his natural curiosity. He is not asking for scientific answers, only a reasonable answer. Your willingness to answer his questions indicates to your child that his parents care about him and that he is important. It is a good idea to have an encyclopedia or dictionary to which *you* and your child may refer.

4 Encourage your child to take one of his books to school to share with classmates. Sharing a book of his own encourages pride in ownership.

5 Place a bird feeder in the yard or on a window sill. Such an activity might spark an interest in your child to read more about birds, their habits, and the like. He might make a chart of the different birds and the number of visits each makes to the feeder.

6 A thermometer placed outside a window and another inside might cause your child to record on a temperature chart his daily observations of differences in temperatures indoors and outdoors.

7 Keep your child's interest in mind. Increasingly, parents are finding this concept basic in capitalizing on the child's inner drive to learn. Knowing your child's interests and enthusiasms makes it relatively easy to develop activities and lessons compatible with his interests.

8 Remember that approval, though inexpensive, builds confidence. A child likes to know he is doing well and that he has the approval of those whom he cherishes. In a climate such as this, effective learning can be expected.

9 Try an experience chart with your child. (An experience chart is a term the teacher uses for a story which the child dictates for the chart, later to be read by the child himself.) An experience chart relates an experience of the child in his own words. You may wish to try an experience chart even if the teacher is not yet using them at school. All that is needed is a large paper bag and a black crayon. The child relates an experience and the parent prints it on the paper bag just as he says it. Then the parent reads the story back to the child and the child, in turn, reads the story back to his parent.

A B C D E F G H I J
K L M N O P Q R S
T U V W X Y Z
a b c d e f g h i j k l m n
o p q r s t u v w x y z
1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

10 Use manuscript writing which is customary in early grades. In writing experience charts, you should use letters which are about an inch tall. The letters are very much like those your child sees in print.

11 Read the newspaper weather forecast with your child. A child listening to television has probably heard the words—humidity, temperature, wind velocity. Seeing these words in print reinforces words which may be in his oral vocabulary. Plan with your child and make a trip to the nearest weather station.

12 Help your child by making labels. Label each sea shell he brings home from the beach. Make a sign for the bridge or airport he builds with blocks. Make a sign for his rock collection. As he is able to use a black crayon, assist him in making his own signs. When visitors come, let him read his signs to them.

13 Play "Categories" with your child. Choose a category such as flowers, trees, or baseball players. Each person names as many words as he can for the category.

14 Play "How Many Syllables?" You should explain how to count syllables. Then see how many one-syllable words each person or the group can name, then two syllables, and so on. The parent may say a word and ask the child to put up one, two, or three fingers, depending on the number of syllables the word has.

15 Try a story-telling game with your child. You might begin a story—"Once upon a time there was a boy who had three puppies." Then it is your child's time to add a sentence. After his sentence, you add one, and so on.

16 Play the game "Who am I? You describe a book character: "I had a red coat. I carried a basket to grandmother's house. Who am I?" (Little Red Riding Hood) If your child makes the correct answer, he becomes the next pretender.

17 Let your child watch a television show, then discuss it with him. Newspaper reviews may be useful for your discussion. Try to build an interest in reading by relating television to books about similar subjects.

18 Help your child write a letter requesting information. Hopefully, he will get an answer, for all children like to get mail. After the information is received, your child may use it to make a scrapbook. After learning the letter-writing technique, supply him with stationery and stamps in order that he may write letters requesting information or items of interest such as are found in advertisements on cereal boxes.

19 Encourage your child in helping to plan the family vacation. Plan a trip to the public library for more information about the place the family will visit. If your child has special interests, plan a portion of your vacation around these interests. Some gas stations sell an inexpensive atlas which could add information and interest to the family vacation.

20 Help your child read abbreviations. FBI, USA, YR., MO., MPH, TV, and CO. are some of the common abbreviations. Let your child write a page of: "Abbreviations I Can Read."

21 Initiate games relative to the rhyming of words. The parent might say, "What rhymes with such words as: hop, ill, night, ball, tack?" It is the child who figures out one or more rhyming words. Later your child may be taught to write the rhyming word.

22 Prepare picture and word cards for your child. Put the picture on one side of the card and the appropriate word on the back. Use common nouns such as apple, chair, table, bed. (Parents may purchase Picture-Word Cards by E. W. Dolch. Also Basic Sight Vocabulary Cards are available by Dolch which include 220 of the commonest "service words" on individual cards. These inexpensive cards may be purchased from bookstores or school supply stores, or ordered from Garrard Publishing Company, Champaign, Illinois.)

23 Let your child fix his favorite sandwich. Help him cut off the crusts so that the sandwich is a square. Explain to your child that a square has four equal sides—like a sandwich. Cut the square on the diagonal so you have two triangles. Show these triangles to your child and let him know that one triangle is half a square and that two halves make a whole square. You may have to play this game on different days before your child grasps the difference between shapes.

24 Encourage your child to draw a floor plan of his home. Help him to label each room. He may enjoy drawing the floor plan to a simple scale.

25 Talk with your child and listen as he talks to you. Conversation is an important skill and is needed in learning to read. Home routines can provide opportunities for much talking.

Independent Readers

By the time a child reaches the third or fourth grade, he is usually able to read simple materials with little outside help. At this age, he begins to enjoy independence in his reading and may, at times, resist some of the old and familiar evidences of interest hereto shown by his parents. This in no way relieves the parent of his continued responsibility for helping his child.

This is a very important time in a child's reading development. At the beginning of this "independent" period in life, he needs to find books which are not too elementary for him, yet which are easy enough for his present reading skills. Parents should not push the child to read books beyond his depth; in doing so, the parent may provoke the child to give up with a feeling of complete failure.

During this period parents can help establish a child's positive attitude toward books by:

- Buying and reading books themselves.
- Taking time to read to the child orally, especially when the child is ready to listen.
- Providing a quiet time during the day for parent and child to read together. ("Daily" should be the goal when at all possible.)
- Giving the child a choice of places from which he may borrow books—the school library, the public library, his home library, or his neighborhood friends may wish to share their books.
- Finding a comfortable place for the child to read.
- Encouraging the use of reference materials for further reading about interests and hobbies.
- Encouraging the reading of comic books and funny papers.

Suggestions and Activities for Independent Readers

1 Use a black crayon to indicate the route for a trip you and your child are planning to take. Let your child list and read to you the names of cities or towns through which you will pass. Let him list and read the names of counties through which you plan to travel. By using the map, help him to distinguish North, South, East, and West. On the actual trip let him help direct the way by reading the map.

2 Find a baseball story during baseball season. Perhaps a story of the life of a baseball hero would interest him. You may read aloud a portion of the book. If your child is interested, he will likely continue on his own.

3 Remember that your child's interests may change very often. Discovering his inclinations may not be so easy, for they may change from week to week. Suggestions which may help to discover these interests:

- Be a sympathetic listener.
- Compare notes with his teacher; she may know of interests of which the parent is not aware.
- Ask questions such as:
  a. If you could take a one-day trip, where would you go?
  b. If you had $3.00 to spend, what would you buy?
  c. If you had a museum of your own, what would you put in it?
  d. Name one thing you would like to do most.

4 Play the "Treasure Game." Fill a small box with assorted objects. Have your child close his eyes and touch the items in the box, listing them as he identifies them. Objects might also be classified according to those that are alike: hard vs soft objects, wood vs metal objects, etc. In addition, your child might write a sentence about each object.

5 Select many small articles which will fit into an English walnut shell. Tape the shell and ask your child to list the items he thinks are in the shell. Open the shell and compare the list with actual items.

6 Choose a picture from a magazine, newspaper, or mail-order catalogue and ask your child to make up a story about the picture. Encourage your child to make up a reasonable story based on the picture.

7 Let your child choose a cartoon from a newspaper or magazine and make up a story about it. Some children will be able to write only a sentence or two, while others may write a page.

Cut a cartoon such as "Peanuts" into sections. Let your child put the pieces back together in proper story sequence. Let him tell the story or read the comic strip. This activity will help your child see that ideas and events have a sequence. **8**

Purchase craft kits and materials for your child. Many children like to select those which interest them, thus extending knowledge through reading and following directions as they prepare the finished product. **9**

Help your child write a letter to a favorite author. Your child may tell the author why he liked or did not like his book. He may want to ask the author a question. The public librarian may be able to supply the author's address, or your child may write the author at the publisher's address and the letter will be forwarded. **10**

Hum a famous television commercial. Let your child write or tell you the words. Let him write a commercial all his own. **11**

Write each letter of the alphabet on separate cards. Let your child draw out four or five cards and use those letters to make a sentence. Suppose he drew S T M H in that sequence. He could write this sentence: Sally took me home. **12**

Use an advertisement in the newspaper and ask your child to write a list of items which will total $2.50 or some other designated amount. **13**

Use word games to build your child's vocabulary. You and your child may take turns thinking of words that: **14**

- Have more than one meaning.
- Are made of two smaller words.
- Are four-letter words and may be rearranged to make other words.
- Are taken from a foreign language.

15 Place a bulletin board in your child's room. He will enjoy putting symbols, his stories, his art work, and the like on the bulletin board.

16 Encourage your child to collect and read maps—road maps, city maps, county maps, and others. He may enjoy drawing a map of the neighborhood.

17 Watch the stockmarket in the newspaper with your child. Choose a specific stock and help your child see gains or losses. Some parents may wish to invest a few dollars in a stock for their child, thus stimulating interest in the newspaper and business world.

18 Free materials are available on request. Your child may enjoy using some of the following addresses and requesting one copy of these booklets:

- *Dog Training Tips*
- *Basics of Cat and Kitten Care*
- *How To Raise a Happy Dog*
- *People Need Pets*

  Address:
  Pet Food Institute
  Department TG
  111 East Wacker Drive
  Chicago, Illinois 60601

- *What Every Good Dog Should Know*
  Address:
  Gaines
  Post Office Box 1007
  Kankakee, Illinois 60901

- *Pet Care Book*
  Address:
  Sergeant's
  James Y. Loving
  P. O. Box 6235
  Richmond, Virginia 23230

- *Let's Collect Rocks*
- *Let's Collect Shells*

  Address:
  Shell Oil Company
  50 West 50th Street
  New York, New York 10020

- *Bicycle Blue Book*

  Address:
  The Goodyear Tire and Rubber Company
  Public Relations Department
  1144 East Market Street
  Akron, Ohio 44316